

Application No. 10/025,307
Amendment-A dated 05/18/2004
Response to Office Action 03/01/2004

CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist section, a rear waist section, an intermediate section which extends between and connects said waist sections, a pair of laterally opposed side edges, a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said absorbent article comprising:
 - a) a substantially liquid-impermeable stretchable outer cover configured to provide a first level of elongation;
 - b) a liquid permeable stretchable top surface attached to said stretchable outer cover; said stretchable top surface having a first zone that is configured to provide a second level of elongation that is less than said first level of elongation, said first zone of said top surface is provided by a stretchable bodyside liner and a means for restricting the stretchability of said stretchable bodyside liner;
 - c) at least one containment component attached to said liquid permeable top surface; and
 - d) an absorbent body located between said stretchable outer cover and said stretchable top surface.
2. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said top surface is an extensible bodyside liner.
3. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 2 wherein said extensible bodyside liner is a necked nonwoven.
4. (currently amended) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said first zone is provided by a combination of a surge layer attached to ~~an~~ said extensible bodyside liner.

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5. (currently amended) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said first zone is provided by a combination of a tissue layer attached to ~~an~~ said extensible bodyside liner.

6. (currently amended) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said first zone is provided by a combination of a layer of adhesive applied to ~~an~~ said extensible bodyside liner.

7. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 6 wherein said layer of adhesive is in a swirl pattern.

8. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said first zone is provided by a heat settable bodyside liner.

9. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said stretchable outer cover comprises a necked laminate which includes at least one layer of a non-elastic neckable material and at least one layer of a non-elastic film.

10. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said first zone at least partially overlaps said absorbent body.

11. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said first level of elongation is at least about 20 percent and said second level of elongation is less than 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width.

12. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said first level of elongation is at least about 40 percent and said second level of elongation is less than 40 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width.

13. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said top surface further defines a second zone and wherein said second level of elongation does not exceed a level of elongation provided by said second zone of the top surface.

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14. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 13 wherein said stretchable outer cover is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of at least about 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width;

said first zone of said stretchable top surface is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of less than 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width; and

said second zone of said stretchable top surface is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of at least about 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width.

15. (canceled)

16. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 1 wherein upon swelling of said absorbent body said absorbent body elongates said stretchable outer cover more than said stretchable top surface.

17. (currently amended) A pant-like, prefastened, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist section, a rear waist section, an intermediate section which extends between and connects said waist sections, a pair of laterally opposed side edges, a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said pant-like absorbent article comprising:

a) a substantially liquid-impermeable stretchable outer cover configured to provide a first level of elongation;

b) a liquid permeable stretchable top surface attached to said stretchable outer cover; said top surface having a first zone that is configured to provide a second level of elongation that is less than said first level of elongation, said first zone of said top surface is provided by a stretchable bodyside liner and a means for restricting the stretchability of said stretchable bodyside liner;

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c) at least one containment component attached to said liquid permeable top surface;

d) an absorbent body located between said stretchable outer cover and said stretchable top surface; and

e) a pair of fasteners refastenably attaching said laterally opposed side edges in said front waist section to said laterally opposed side edges in said rear waist section to provide said pant-like, prefastened absorbent article prior to packaging.

18. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said top surface is an extensible bodyside liner.

19. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 18 wherein said extensible bodyside liner is a necked nonwoven.

20. (currently amended) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said first zone is provided by a combination of a surge layer attached to ~~an~~ said extensible bodyside liner.

21. (currently amended) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said first zone is provided by a combination of a tissue layer attached to ~~an~~ said extensible bodyside liner.

22. (currently amended) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said first zone is provided by a combination of a layer of adhesive applied to ~~an~~ said extensible bodyside liner.

23. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 22 wherein said layer of adhesive is in a swirl pattern.

24. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said first zone is provided by a heat settable bodyside liner.

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25. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said stretchable outer cover comprises a necked laminate which includes at least one layer of a non-elastic neckable material and at least one layer of a non-elastic film.

26. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said first zone at least partially overlaps said absorbent body.

27. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said first level of elongation is at least about 20 percent and said second level of elongation is less than 20 percent when subjected to a tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width according to said Material Elongation and Deformation Tensile Test.

28. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said first level of elongation is at least about 40 percent and said second level of elongation is less than 40 percent when subjected to a tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width according to said Material Elongation and Deformation Tensile Test.

29. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein said top surface further defines a second zone, and wherein said second level of elongation does not exceed a level of elongation provided by said second zone of said top surface.

30. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 29 wherein said stretchable outer cover is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of at least about 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width;

said first zone of said stretchable top surface is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of less than 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width; and

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said second zone of said stretchable top surface is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of at least about 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width.

31. (canceled)

32. (original) The pant-like, prefastened disposable absorbent article of claim 17 wherein upon swelling of said absorbent body said absorbent body elongates said stretchable outer cover more than said stretchable top surface.

33. (original) A disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist section, a rear waist section, an intermediate section which extends between and connects said waist sections, a pair of laterally opposed side edges, a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said absorbent article comprising:

a) a substantially liquid-impermeable stretchable outer cover configured to provide a first level of elongation;

b) a liquid permeable stretchable bodyside liner attached to said stretchable outer cover;

c) a pair of containment flaps attached to said liquid permeable stretchable bodyside liner;

d) a surge layer attached to said liquid permeable stretchable bodyside liner; and

e) an absorbent body located between said stretchable outer cover and said stretchable bodyside liner;

wherein said stretchable bodyside liner and said surge layer combine to provide a first zone that is configured to provide a second level of elongation that is less than the first level of elongation.

34. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein said extensible bodyside liner is a necked nonwoven.

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35. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein said stretchable outer cover comprises a necked laminate which includes at least one layer of a non-elastic neckable material and at least one layer of a non-elastic film.

36. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein said first zone at least partially overlaps said absorbent body.

37. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein said first level of elongation is at least about 20 percent and said second level of elongation is less than 20 percent when subjected to a tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width according to said Material Elongation and Deformation Tensile Test.

38. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein said first level of elongation is at least about 40 percent and said second level of elongation is less than 40 percent when subjected to a tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width according to said Material Elongation and Deformation Tensile Test.

39. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein said bodyside liner alone provides a second zone and said second level of elongation does not exceed a level of elongation provided by said second zone of said top surface.

40. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein said stretchable outer cover is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of at least about 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width;

said first zone of said extensible bodyside liner is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of less than 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width; and

said second zone of said extensible bodyside liner is further configured to provide a substantially permanent deformation of at least about 20 percent when subjected to said tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width.

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41. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 33 wherein upon swelling of said absorbent body said absorbent body elongates said stretchable outer cover more than said stretchable bodyside liner.

42. (currently amended) A disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist section, a rear waist section, an intermediate section which extends between and connects said waist sections, a pair of laterally opposed side edges, a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said absorbent article comprising:

- a) a substantially liquid-impermeable stretchable outer cover;
- b) a liquid permeable stretchable top surface attached to said stretchable outer cover; said stretchable top surface having a first zone and a second zone wherein said ~~first zone provides a level of elongation that is less than the level of elongation provided by the second zone~~ second zone provides an elongation that is at least about 20 percent and said first zone provides an elongation that is less than 20 percent when subjected to a tensile force of 100 gmf per inch (per 2.54 cm) of width;
- c) at least one containment component attached to said liquid permeable top surface; and
- d) an absorbent body located between said stretchable outer cover and said stretchable top surface.

43. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 42 wherein said top surface is an extensible bodyside liner.

44. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 43 wherein said extensible bodyside liner is a necked nonwoven.

45. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 42 wherein said first zone is provided by a combination of a surge layer attached to an extensible bodyside liner.

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46. (original) The disposable absorbent article of claim 42 wherein said first zone at least partially overlaps said absorbent body.

47. (canceled)
